DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 289 821 SP 029 580

TITLE	Instructional Partners, Principals, Teachers, and Instructional Assistants.
INSTITUTION	Indiana State Dept. of Public Instruction, Indianapolis.
PUB DATE	[86]
NOTE	37p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Techniques; *Educational Cooperation; Elementary Education; *Elementary School Teachers; Principals; Teacher Qualifications; *Teacher Role; *Teaching Assistants; *Teamwork
IDENTIFIERS	Indiana

ABSTRACT

This handbook examines various topics of interest and concern to teachers as they work with instructional assistants forming a classroom instructional partnership and functioning as a team. These topics include: (1) instructional assistant qualifications; (2) duties--instructional, classroom clerical, auxillary; (3) factors to be considered when selecting an instructional assistant; (4) teacher/assistant responsibilities; and (5) special concerns and suggested techniques. A resource section covers the folowing topics: (1) glossary of educational terms; (2) child growth and development; (3) types of student questions; and (4) a sample instructional assistant application form. (JD)

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INSTRUCTIONAL PARTNERS

PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS

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INSTRUCTIONAL PARTNERS

PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS

Indiana Department of Education
Center for School Improvement and Performance
Office of School Assistance

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INTRODUCTION

As the number of instructional assistants has increased in public schools, it is imperative that they be recognized and accepted as significant members of the school staff. It is the working relationship between the teacher and instructional assistants that creates the educational climate of the classroom. If this climate is to be conducive to generating maximum student learning and achievement, it is vital that the teacher and instructional assistants form a classroom instructional partnership and function as a genuine team. The key components of an effective partnership are open two-way communication, mutual respect and trust of one another.

This handbook examines various topics of interest and concern to teachers as they strive to work with instructional assistants and to make them contributing members of a classroom partnership. The Indiana Department of Education, Center for School Improvement and Performance, wishes you continued success in your quest of educating the youth of Indiana.

Section 1

QUALIFICATIONS

QUALIFICATIONS

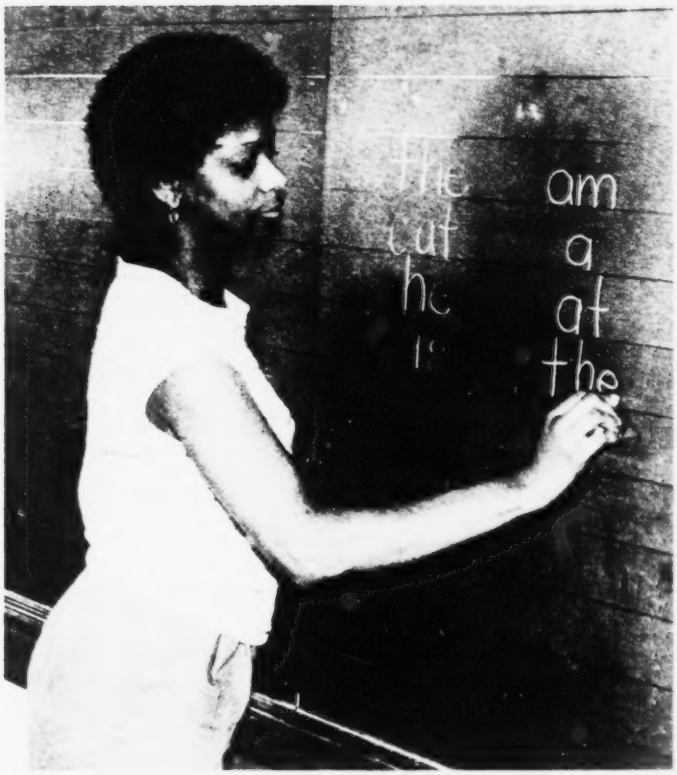
INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications of instructional assistants required by school corporations in the state of Indiana vary according to the school corporation and the program to which the assistant is assigned, such as PRIME TIME or Chapter I programs. Listed below are some qualifications that school corporations in Indiana have utilized in the selection process when hiring an individual to perform the job as an instructional assistant.

- Has a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Is in good physical and mental health.
- Respects confidentiality.
- Uses acceptable English.
- Has previous experience working with children.
- Likes children.
- Can take, understand and follow directions.
- Has a history of responsible behavior.
- Has clerical abilities.
- Has a pleasing personality.
- Is neat in appearance.
- Has a good moral character.
- Has a positive attitude.
- Reads well.
- Displays a compassionate nature.
- Is patient.
- Is willing to attend in-service training programs.
- Is sensitive to children with different ability levels.
- Is sensitive to children of different races, ethnic or religious backgrounds.
- Accepts constructive criticism with a positive attitude.
- Is punctual.
- Writes well for the purpose of communication.
- Has good penmanship — Primary grades — manuscript writing.
  Intermediate grades — cursive writing.

Section 2

DUTIES



DUTIES

The duties of instructional assistants can be divided into three basic categories: I. INSTRUCTIONAL, II. CLASSROOM CLERICAL and III. AUXILIARY. The duties of instructional assistants vary according to the program and program guidelines to which the assistant is assigned, such as PRIME TIME or Chapter I programs. The following examples are representative of the various duties assigned under each category to instructional assistants throughout the state of Indiana.

I. INSTRUCTIONAL DUTIES

- Supervise teacher-planned activities.
- Assist students with make-up work.
- Assist with seatwork and workbook activities.
- Listen and respond to students as they express their thoughts orally.
- Listen to students read individually and in small groups.
- Tutor students individually and in small groups.
- Assist students in the reading and the computer laboratories.
- Assist students with a variety of drill work and practice exercises.
- Assist students with group projects.
- Assist students in writing and illustrating books.
- Assist new students with catch-up work.
- Read to students.
- Tell stories to students.
- Assist with practice of dramas or presentations.
- Assist individual students or small groups with library assignments.
- Assist substitute teachers by providing necessary information on classroom routine during the regular teacher's absence.
- Check papers and workbooks.
- Copy lessons on the chalkboard for the classroom teacher.
- Assist students in learning center activities.

II. CLASSROOM CLERICAL DUTIES

- Assist with class record keeping, e.g., taking attendance.
- Prepare materials requested by the classroom teacher.
- Prepare and arrange bulletin board displays.
- Assist in preparing learning center materials.
- Collect funds - lunch, field trip and special activity monies.
- Assist with classroom filing related to instruction.
- Schedule audio-visual materials and equipment.
- Make arrangements for field trips.
- Prepare student work folders.
- Assist with school volunteer programs.
- Schedule parent conferences.

III. AUXILIARY DUTIES

- Assist with cafeteria, bus and playground duties.
- Assist with emergency drills and assemblies.
- Assist in the sick room and administer first aid according to school policy.
- Assist with restroom breaks and hall supervision.
- Assist students with clothing, as necessary.
- Assist the teacher with classroom housekeeping responsibilities.

Section 3

BEFORE YOU BEGIN . . . AND AFTER YOU START

Selection Criteria for your Classroom
Professional Ethics

BEFORE YOU BEGIN . . . AND AFTER YOU START

Evidence has shown that the classroom teacher is the one who really determines the worth of any instructional assistant's classroom contribution. A teacher must be committed to the value and use of an instructional assistant if a classroom partnership is to emerge. There are many factors to be considered when selecting an instructional assistant and future classroom instructional partner.

The following are some suggestions that a teacher might choose to consider.

BEFORE THE ASSISTANT IS HIRED:

- Complete a needs assessment of your classroom in relationship to an instructional assistant's role.
- Attempt to match the assistant's interests and expertise with the instructional needs of your students.
- Prepare a simple checklist to use during the initial interview of assistant applicants. The checklist might include items listed in the Qualification Section of this booklet along with the following points:
    - Personal appearance
    - Personality
    - Speech
    - Specific mannerisms
    - Interest in students
    - Talents and interests
    - Professional expectations and goals
    - Interpersonal relationship characteristics

OPERATIVE PROCEDURES

Every assistant should have certain information about the school in which she will be working. Sometimes it is incorrectly assumed that this information is known. Make every effort to assure that the assistant has knowledge of the following:

- The physical layout of the building.
- The procedures for fire and tornado drills.
- Where supplies are kept and how to obtain them.
- What audio-visual and/or duplicating equipment is available for the assistant to use and the procedure for scheduling the equipment. (The assistant should be trained on how to operate all equipment.)
- Emergency procedures — i.e., accident, illnessess, weather conditions, fire, etc.
- The names of all school personnel — both certified and non-certified.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Listed below are some general tips that will help guide the assistant in her daily duties:

DO:

- Be responsible. Be on time and regular in attendance. If the assistant cannot be on the job, she should call and inform the principal or supervisor as soon as possible.

- Respect the confidentiality of school personnel and students.
- Dress and speak appropriately.
- Become familiar with and follow the school rules.
- Maintain a positive attitude toward the school, its staff, and the students.
- Learn established routines and procedures that are in place in the school.

DO NOT:

- Discuss students with anyone outside of the school. There should be absolutely no gossip about students or their families, staff, etc.
- Be judgmental of the classroom teacher's abilities and teaching methods.
- Criticize the school or its staff. If the assistant has a problem or concern, he should follow proper procedures for resolving it.
- Get involved in school "politics".
- *Orientation sessions* - provide the opportunity for administrators and teachers to acquaint instructional assistants with the operating procedures of a building and the importance of professional ethics.

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

The instructional assistant will be interacting with administrative personnel, with teachers and with students in her daily tasks. It is important that the assistant develop and maintain positive working relationships.

WORKING WITH ADMINISTRATORS

The instructional assistant will find it valuable to know that the principal has the primary responsibility for supervising the personnel working in his building. The principal should:

- Define job responsibilities — and explain both negative and positive expectations.
- Establish work hours.
- Interpret the policies and rules of the school.
- Provide and schedule training opportunities for the assistants.
- Evaluate assistants — providing constructive suggestions for continuous improvement.
- Provide a support system.

If the instructional assistant has any problems concerning her role in the school either in working with teachers or students or with any policy or procedure, it should be discussed with the principal.

WORKING WITH TEACHERS

A positive working relationship between teacher and instructional assistant is crucial to a successful program. The teacher and assistant must work as a team. For this to happen, there has to be a clear understanding of each other's roles. It is up to the teacher to determine the educational plan for the class. However, the assistant helps to implement the plan. The classroom teacher can take the lead in helping the instructional assistant. The assistant's role is to:

- Remember that the teacher is the leader in the classroom.
- Keep lines of communication open by meeting with the teacher as a team frequently. Time for conferencing should be set up on a definite schedule. (See planning section of this booklet.)
- Accept the tasks given by the teacher. If unsure of just what the teacher wants, then ask for clarification.

- Know what the teacher expects from her in maintaining discipline in the classroom. (See discipline section of this booklet).
- Provide information to the teacher on a student's performance. If asked to keep certain records, do so willingly and carefully.
- Show initiative, but do not usurp the authority of the teacher.
- Work out any problems or misunderstandings with the teacher and understand that they are never carried outside the classroom or school.

WORKING WITH STUDENTS

The presence of the instructional assistant in the classroom can help the teacher in the important task of meeting the individual needs of each student. As the assistant works with students in groups or individually, she can be guided to:

- Learn the names of the students as quickly as possible.
- Keep a positive attitude with students. Give them encouragement and honest praise. Provide opportunities for success. It is important that the assistant help the students accept and learn from their failures.
- Be consistent and fair in her interactions with students.
- Let the students take an active role in the learning process.
- Use questioning techniques that require more than a "yes" or "no" answer.
- Listen and respond to the students. Many times the assistant may notice a learning difficulty, evidence of physical abuse or an emotional problem that a student is experiencing. This information should be conveyed to the teacher at the first opportunity.
- Respect the confidentiality of students.
- Remember all students can achieve.
- Engage in conversation with students.
- Relax and have fun with the students.
- State expectations directly to students.
- Show students that she is human.
- Make subject matter meaningful to the students.
- Respect the student's right to solitude and privacy if desired.
- Look for changes in facial expressions (happy or sad), body movements (slump or jerk), and vocal responses which suggest understanding, frustration or confusion.

And be guided not to:

- Attack students with negative remarks.
- React too quickly to a situation.
- Ignore student's input.
- Place unnecessary pressure on the students.
- Assume that the students always understand assigned tasks.
- "Put down" students.
- Forget to help students enjoy learning.

AFTER THE SECRETARY IS HIRED

- Stress that, as the teacher, you will be the leader in the classroom and she will be your assistant.
- Explain your philosophy of education to the assistant.
- Encourage the assistant to show initiative and to be creative. Let her know that she is free to make suggestions.
- Let the assistant know you will be there for her whenever needed. (Be a good support base.)
- Discuss with the assistant how the planning sessions will operate.
- Treat the assistant as a paraprofessional and inform him of the value of his contribution to the students.

- Be a good listener when the assistant needs to discuss a school problem.
- Watch your C-C Ratio — "Criticism - Compliment" Ratio.
- Work with your principal in arranging a training program for assistants.
- Use the assistant as a link to the community by asking her to compile a resource file that lists the talents of community people, special programs being offered, special visiting celebrities, etc.
- Have daily positive conversations about classroom activities, achievements, and students.
- Model the classroom behavior you expect the assistant to display — such as: be prompt, courteous, well-groomed, pleasant, patient, understanding and reliable.
- Make a place in the room which can be the assistant's space with table and chairs.
- Keep communication lines open.
- Make an effort to build a mutual bond of respect between you and the assistant.
- Help the assistant enjoy her work.
- Discuss in detail with the assistant the classroom discipline policies.

Section 4

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

PLANNING SESSION RESPONSIBILITIES

It is important that you and your instructional assistant work as a classroom team. Planning is a key component to an effective instructional partnership. Each team member has specific responsibilities that might include the following:

The teacher's role is to:

- Assign specific duties to the assistant.
- Assign students/groups that need assistance.
- Identify lesson objectives and goals.
- Identify material to be used.
- Discuss procedures, techniques and methods to be used. Specific activities and examples should be given to the assistant.
- Solicit questions from the assistant as a means of reviewing and clarifying the expectations for each lesson.
- Support the assistant by giving her positive reinforcement when deserved.
- Help the assistant to improve by offering constructive criticism when required.

The assistant's role is to:

- Listen carefully to all details and take accurate notes.
- Offer suggestions.
- Ask questions if some detail is not fully understood.
- Share any pertinent information about students/groups with the teacher.
- Discuss any special concerns or problems with the teacher.

****SPECIAL NOTE:**

It is expedient and beneficial for the teacher and instructional assistant to discuss the previous day's lessons and student progress before new assignments are considered.

PLANNING SESSIONS, WEEKLY/DAILY

In order for the assistant to use her time to the maximum benefit of the students, it is important that the classroom teacher set aside a specific time each day and each week for planning.

The daily planning session can include:

- Discussing the next day's lessons.
    a. objectives
    b. material needed
    c. students or groups to be instructed
    d. pre-lesson arrangements needed
- Discussing any behavioral or instructional problems.
- Discussing any special events or activities.
- Discussing accomplishments or progress toward goals.
- Discussing and evaluating the day's lessons.
    a. Skills or activities that need repeating
    b. Specific student/group reactions

The weekly planning session might include:

- Reviewing the previous week's lessons.
- Explaining the specific objectives for the lessons.
- Preparing the materials needed for each lesson.
- Anticipating any problems that may occur with individual students/groups.
- Soliciting information from the assistant.
- Sharing information with the assistant.
- Discussing the learning problems of individual students.
- Discussing specific strategies to use in assisting individual students/groups.
- Clarifying the expectations the teacher has of the assistant.
- Soliciting innovative or practical ideas from the assistant.

REVIEW OF TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

I. Planning

- Design lessons
- Design remediation strategies
- Direct learning activities
- Organize and manage the classroom

II. Materials

- Select appropriate materials
- Develop new materials
- Appraise the effectiveness of materials

III. Teaching Content

- Present original instruction
- Assign homework
- Assign instructional assistant's work

IV. Evaluation

- Construct tests
- Identify students' learning difficulties
- Evaluate student achievement
- Assign grades to student work

V. Counseling

- Determine disciplinary actions
- Establish goals with students
- Provide emotional support
- Give educational guidance
- Conference with parents

VI. Record Keeping

- Record entries in student records
- Identify confidential information

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Instructional Assistant _____

Student or Group _____

Subject Area _____ Skill Area _____

Date _____

Purpose of the lesson _____

_____

_____

Procedures _____

_____

_____

Materials _____

_____

Evaluation of the lesson _____

_____

_____

Classroom Teacher's Comments _____

_____

_____

Additional Comments _____

_____

_____

_____

Lesson Evaluation

Student or Group Evaluation

- Was the child/group able to perform the task required in the lesson?
- If the child/group could not perform the task, why not?
- Were there facts or concepts the child/group needed to know before the lesson that weren't previously covered? If so, what were they?
- Did I explain what the child/group was to do in the practice activity so that the task was understood?
- Was the lesson interesting? If not, what could have been done differently?

Assistant Self-Evaluation

- Did I plan well with the teacher for the lesson and understand the goals?
- Did I introduce the lesson so that the child/group understood the concept that the activity was to reinforce?
- Was I enthusiastic enough to get the child/group interested in performing the task?
- Did I explain what the child/group was to do in the practice activity so that task was understood?
- Did I have all the materials I needed for the task to be completed?
- Did I give the child/group positive reinforcement when appropriate?
- Did I encourage the child/group when the activity was difficult?
- Was the activity successful in terms of the objectives and goals?
- Did I make notes on the progress of the child/group?
- Did I keep the child/group apprised of progress toward the goals?
- Did I make detailed notes of what needed to be discussed with the teacher?

EVALUATION OF THE STUDENT/GROUP

This checklist will serve as an evaluation of one lesson or activity and a guide to planning for future lessons or activities.

Name of student/group _____

Name of Assistant _____

Date _____

1. Objective or goal of the lesson or activity: _____

_____

_____

2. Reaction of student/group: _____

_____

a. Did the student/group understand the concepts needed for the activity? _____

_____

b. Did the student/group respond well? If so, in what ways? _____

_____

c. Did the student/group not respond well? Why not? _____

_____

3. Do you recommend any further instruction or reinforcement for the objectives to be met? If so, what? _____

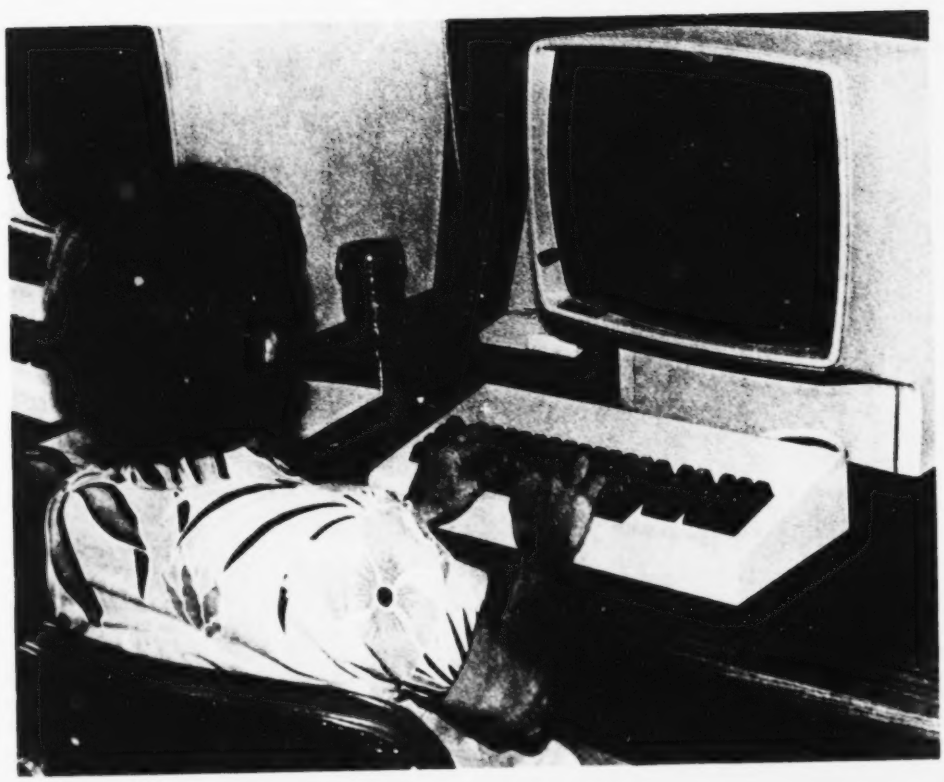
_____

4. How can the next lesson or activity be designed to improve the overall success of the student/group? _____

_____

Section 5

SPECIAL CONCERNS AND SUGGESTED TECHNIQUES



SPECIAL CONCERNS AND SUGGESTED TECHNIQUES

THE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT AND CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

The classroom teacher is responsible for establishing discipline policies for his classroom. When the instructional assistant and the teacher work as partners, it is imperative that the assistant know her role in maintaining effective classroom discipline. The following are suggestions that the teacher may utilize when clarifying the assistant's authority and role in classroom discipline:

- Explain your philosophy of discipline to the assistant.
- Inform the assistant of specific classroom discipline.
- Advise the assistant of her role and authority in discipline matters.
- Acquaint the assistant with the positive and negative consequences and reinforcements given students concerning classroom behavior.
- Review, on a regular basis, discipline procedures and problems with the assistant during planning sessions.

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES FOR INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS

- Encourage students to ask questions.
- Develop and ask questions that have more than one right answer.
- Develop and ask questions that call for an expanded response, questions that cannot be answered in one or two words.
- Provide sufficient "wait time" for a student to respond to questions.
- Praise students for their efforts.
- Praise students when they do well.
- Help students accept and learn from their failures. Constructive criticism is a good way to learn from experience.
- Encourage and teach students to back up their answers with facts.
- Allow students ample time to think about a problem.
- Explain the purpose of the lesson before instruction begins. This technique aids the student in seeing the relevance of the material to be covered.
- Allow students a short time before a lesson to browse the lesson and materials to be used. This allows the students time to organize their thoughts.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTION AND THE ASSISTANT

Computers are now a part of classroom instruction in many schools throughout the state. Instructional assistants are often given the responsibility of helping in computer labs and in helping individual students with various computer tasks. Therefore, the following items should be considered:

- Instruct the assistant on the operational techniques of the computer.
- Review with the assistant appropriate software and its purpose.
- Discuss with the assistant the role of the computer in drill work, practice and enrichment sessions.
- Demonstrate the use of the computer for recording student progress.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT AND THE EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT

The role of the instructional assistant in the Special Education classroom is very challenging and presents unique situations for the teacher and the assistant. The teacher, when explaining the responsibilities of the instructional assistant, might include the following points:

- Remind the assistant that confidentiality of each student's problem or situation is crucial.
- Inform the assistant of the exceptionality of each student.
- Stress the need for consistency regarding interaction with the student and expectations of the student.
- Train the assistant in the correct methods of charting student progress.
- Discuss the purpose of an IEP (Individual Education Plan) with the assistant.
- Guide the assistant in understanding problems and feelings parents of exceptional students encounter.
- Help the assistant realize that often she and the classroom teacher will be the only persons in the school environment who can reach a student if self-control is lost.
- Inform the assistant of the special techniques used when working with the exceptional student.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT AND THE GIFTED STUDENT

The role of the instructional assistant in working with gifted students will also be very challenging and will present new experiences and require using a variety of stimulating instructional approaches as the assistant and teacher strive to help each student reach his potential. The following are suggestions a teacher might emphasize to the assistant:

- Be cognizant of the commonly held characteristics of gifted students.
- Recognize the fact that a student may be gifted in certain areas but not all areas.
- Encourage gifted students to use critical and creative thinking, i.e., synthesis, analysis, evaluation, techniques, etc.
- Foster the attitude of accepting (not judging) all creative ideas as worthwhile.
- Allow a student to show initiative in problem solving. Avoid giving a student an answer too quickly.
- Communicate to an assistant that when a student demonstrates a unique approach to solving a problem or asks questions that indicate deep thought, her role is to be a good listener.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT AND THE NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING STUDENT

If English is not a student's primary language, then the student often is confronted with serious educational and communication problems. A non-English speaking student in his new environment can be faced with many social adjustment problems. As the classroom teacher, you can help the instructional assistant to be cognizant of the following points pertaining to working with a non-English speaking student.

DO:

- Use fluent and distinct speech.
- Use accepted English language.
- Emphasize the main point of a lesson.
- Learn and inform students about the non-English speaking student's cultural background.
- Encourage the student to be proud of his native language, dress and traditions.
- Provide an opportunity for the student to share his experiences with classmates
- Provide the student with as much opportunity as possible to speak in English.

- Conduct the lessons in a structured, well-ordered manner to assist the student with understanding the language.

DO NOT:

- Assume a non-English speaking student is deprived.
- Use slang when communicating with the student.

Communicating with Parents

The use of instructional assistants in the classroom offer many educational benefits to students. When discussing these benefits with parents, the classroom teacher may find the following suggestions helpful:

- Discuss the role of the assistant in your classroom. For example, the assistant:
  - reinforces skills, but does not teach
  - gives individual attention to students/groups, etc.
- Discuss the educational opportunities that students will receive from working with the instructional assistant.
- Stress that the parent should address any communications or questions directly to you, the teacher.

**Emphasize that the assistant will respect the confidentiality of each student and her family.

****SPECIAL NOTE:**

If parents understand and accept the confidentiality factor, then it is to the benefit of the student to invite the instructional assistant to participate in parent-teacher conferences.

Reading Instruction and the Instructional Assistant

The instructional assistant spends a great deal of time working with students in the area of reading; therefore, it is vital that the classroom teacher model and explain the techniques she wants reinforced by the assistant. The following items might be discussed in detail with the assistant:

- Preparation for oral reading, such as having each student read the material silently before oral reading begins.
- Purpose of oral reading.
- How to record a student's progress in oral reading.
- How to help a student use decoding skills.
- How to help a student with phonic skills.
- How to use various techniques to improve the student's comprehension, such as using different questioning levels, etc.
- How to use various teaching approaches to ensure that each student's learning style is addressed.
- How to increase a student's reading expressions.
- How to help a student read more fluently.
- How to help a student learn the vocabulary words.
- How to utilize study skills to enhance a student's learning.

Instructional Assistants and Peer-Evaluation

There may be times when the teacher will need to offer some constructive criticism to the assistant. This may take one of the following forms:

- Offering a suggestion or recommendation for approaching a task in a different way.
- Modeling the kind of behavior you want the assistant to adopt.
- Providing the assistant with articles, books or literature which will increase her understanding of classroom procedures.
- Allowing the assistant the opportunity to observe a more experienced assistant.
- Arranging time for the assistant to exchange creative practical ideas with other aides.

The classroom teacher can help the assistant feel good about herself and the contribution she is making in the classroom by trying some of the following ideas:

- Saying "thank you" often.
- Remembering special days, i.e., birthdays, anniversaries.
- Providing official recognition at staff meetings or other conferences.
- Smiling and giving words of appreciation when deserved.
- Sending notes of thanks.
- Having the administration recognize assistants for special contributions.
- Giving awards that are meaningful, such as pins, badges, certificates.
- Planning special meetings for the assistants.
- Including assistants in school functions.
- Informing assistants of their important contributions to the school.
- Having discussions with assistants.
- Giving daily "pats on the back" and encouragement.
- Treating assistants with respect.
- Resisting patronizing the assistant or considering him an "underling."

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT OR VOLUNTEER VIEWPOINT*

If you want my loyalty, interests and best efforts, remember that. . .

- I need a SENSE OF BELONGING, a feeling that I am honestly needed for my total self, not just for my hands, nor because I take orders well.
- I need to have a sense of sharing in planning our objectives. My need will be satisfied only when I feel that my ideas have had a fair hearing, and that the goals and objectives are within reach make sense to me.
- I need to have my leader aware that people are loyal only to what they help to create and to the degree of their participation.
- I need to feel that what I'm doing has real purpose or contributes to human welfare — that its value extends even beyond my personal gain, or yours.
- I need to share in making the rules by which, together, we shall live and work toward our goals.
- I need to know in some clear detail just what is expected of me — not only my detailed tasks but that within it I have opportunity to make some decisions.
- I need to have some responsibilities that challenge, that are within range of my abilities and interest, and that contribute toward reaching both your goals and mine.
- I need to be kept informed. What I'm not up on, I may be down on. (Keeping me informed is one way to give me status as an individual).
- I need to see that progress is being made toward the goals we have set.
- I need to have confidence in my superiors — confidence based upon assurance of consistent fair treatment, recognition when it is due, and trust that my loyalty will bring increased security.

In brief, it really doesn't matter how much sense my part in this organization makes to you — I must feel that the whole deal makes sense to me!

* By Dr. J. Donald Phillips, Chancellor Emeritus, Hillsdale College, Hillsdale Michigan.

TOPICS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT TRAINING

Instructional assistants, to be truly effective and reach their professional potential, must be

given an opportunity to receive formal paraprofessional training. Training topics that might be appropriate are:

- Reading skills and techniques
- Math skills and techniques
- Verbal communication
- Written communication
- Handwriting skills — primary-manuscript/intermediate-cursive
- Audio-visual equipment and operation
- Discipline techniques
- How to accept and grow from constructive criticism
- General instructional techniques: questioning techniques, reinforcement procedures, etc.
- Different methods of recording student progress
- Interpersonal relationship techniques
- Lesson organization
- Time management
- How to develop and use instructional materials
- Differences in learning styles
- Test administration

It is vital that good two-way communication occurs between the classroom teacher and the instructional assistant. Often discussion starters can be helpful. The assistant may have the following "What if" questions.

What if . . . — Discussion Starters

What if. . .

- the students do not accept me as an authority figure?
- I finish a lesson or activity too early?
- the students are restless and inattentive?
- the students do not have necessary materials?
- a student becomes seriously ill?
- I feel my ideas are not being given serious consideration?
- the students' enthusiasm gets out of control during an activity?
- the lesson or activity proves to be too difficult for the students?
- I feel my talents are not being used effectively?
- I feel my initiative isn't appreciated?
- a student shares private or personal "inappropriate" family information during a group activity?
- I feel my working area is inadequate?

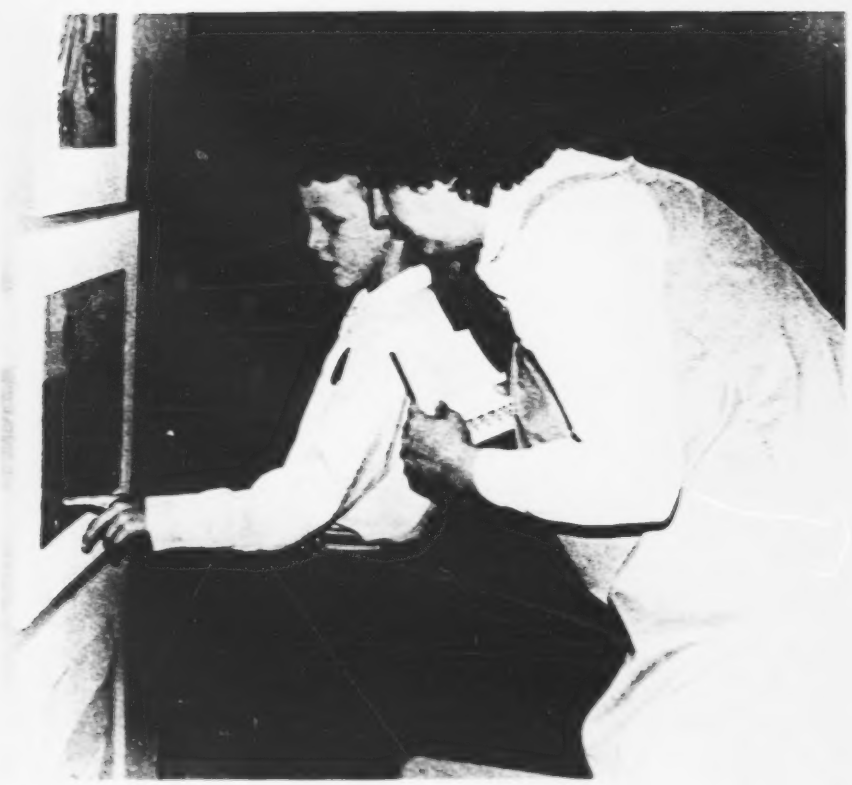
Recommendations

Instructional assistants are working in the schools throughout the state of Indiana in various programs. As the corporations strive to achieve maximum benefits from the assistant's efforts, the following suggestions will be helpful. Each school corporation might attempt to:

- Develop an adequate training program for instructional assistants.
- Send the classroom teacher and instructional assistant as a team to workshops.
- Plan and conduct local in-service which includes both classroom teachers and instructional assistants.
- Provide inservice opportunities for assistants which will allow for updating of skills.
- Include instructional assistants in staff meetings.
- Invite assistants to social functions of the school and staff.
- Provide opportunities when assistants can meet as a group to discuss professional concerns.

Section 6

RESOURCE SECTION



RESOURCE SECTION

The Resource Section of this booklet was prepared to give the classroom teacher some ideas and information to share with his instructional assistant. Included in the section are the following topics:

- Glossary of Educational Terms
- Child Growth and Development
- Types of Questions
- Sample Form — Instructional Assistant Application

GLOSSARY OF EDUCATIONAL TERMS

1. **Achievement Test** — A test which measures the degree to which a student has achieved in a given subject field or in the general aspects of learning.
2. **Basal Reader Approach** — A reading program in which instructional content and methodology are determined through the use of a series of basal readers.
3. **Diagnostic Test** — A test designed to locate specific strengths and/or weaknesses of a student.
4. **Experience Approach** — A reading approach in which the instructional program is based on real experiences the students have had and written about.
5. **Frustration Level** — The level at which a student can read with no more than ten word recognition errors in 100 words with below 50 percent comprehension.
6. **Grade Equivalent** — A score based upon the grade (year and month) achieved by average students in that grade level.
7. **Intelligence Quotient** — The ratio of a student's mental age to the mental age normal for his chronological age. It often is associated with the capacity to acquire and apply knowledge.
8. **Instructional Reading Level** — The level at which the student can read with no more than five word recognition errors in 100 words with at least 80 percent comprehension.
9. **Independent Reading Level** — The level at which a student can read with no more than one word recognition error in 100 words with at least 90 percent comprehension.
10. **Phonics** — That aspect of reading instruction in which the speech sounds of letters and groups of letters are taught.
11. **Readability Level** — The difficulty of reading material expressed in terms of the grade level at which the average student would be expected to read the material successfully.
12. **Reading Comprehension** — The process of understanding what is read.
13. **Remedial Reading** — Reading instruction designed for specific or general reading deficiencies and generally given outside in addition to the regular reading program.
14. **Sight Words** — Words which a student can recognize immediately when they are presented to him/her.
15. **Word Recognition** — The process of identifying words according to any one or a combination of the word recognition techniques, e.g., phonetic analysis, context clues or structural analysis.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The physical, mental and emotional growth and development of children is a highly complicated, lengthy process. In addition, children must learn to function within their individual cultural systems and socio-economic environments.

Characteristics of a 5 Year-Old Child

Physical	Mental	Emotional
• narrower stance • coordinated - large muscles • active • handedness preference • losing baby teeth	• competent • project minded • talkative • questions • time-immediate • new words • numbers-concrete	• friendly • likes praise and affection • is dependable, helpful • likes to feel independent, serious • demanding • temporary anxieties • concrete fears • judgmental • blaming others • alibis

Characteristics of a 6 Year-Old Child

Physical	Mental	Emotional
• motor skills improve • vigorous activity • easily fatigued • talkative • short attention span • eye-hand coordination poor • losing teeth easily	• interested in self • lives in present • decision making-difficulty • experiments • learns through participation • learns to read • curious • imaginitive	• intense • "tattle tale" • independent • explosive temper • rebellious • generous • craves praise • rejects criticism

Characteristics of a 7 Year-Old Child

Physical	Mental	Emotional
• large muscles - finesse • rough games	• skill development fundamentals	• need for status • need for security • need for affection • need for independence • calm • can analyze situation • sensitive • reacts immediately • play groups — own sex • many fears • development of values

Characteristics of an 8 Year-Old Child

Physical	Mental	Emotional
• subtle changes in broad proportions • eyes — can adjust near for distances • quick • rough • energetic	• perceptive • responds quickly • apprises situation • challenges self • enterprising • likes drama • can plan • spontaneous	• outgoing • likes adults • boisterous • conscious of status • sensitive

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Levels of Comprehension	Types of Comprehension Questions	Listening/Communicating Skills of Students
(1) *Literal* — Simplest level of comprehension. Students learn to answer factual questions from material contained within the story.	Who? What? Where? When?	*Restating* — Simply repeating as precisely as one can the exact words of the speaker. Means by which the listener lets the speaker know he has heard what was said.
(2) *Inference* — Students learn to analyze more closely the information to note relationships, draw conclusions and inferences, and to make generalizations.	Why? Explain how. Explain why. Categorize. Compare.	*Paraphrasing* — Students learn to synthesize information, to restate in their own words the important elements of a lengthy or complex statement in a concise matter.
(3) *Evaluation* — Students learn to judge and evaluate content and the author's presentation. Students learn to detect bias, propaganda, inconsistencies and thoroughness of information supplied.	Explain why the author may make a specific statement. Judge the validity of the arguments presented. Compare reports to detect inconsistencies and thoroughness.	*Clarifying* — Students learn to ask questions that get at the meaning of what is said, to understand more fully the intent of the speaker. Gives the speaker, as precisely as possible, the opportunity to be understood.

Levels of Comprehension	Types of Comprehension Questions	Listening/Communicating Skills of Students
(4) *Appreciation* — Students become aware of literary techniques employed by authors to produce an emotional response.	How did you feel when. . .? What did you picture when. . .?	*Valuing* — Students listen for information.
(5) *Creative* — Students learn to use information to formulate or extend ideas of their own.	Give your views. . . How would you. . .? What would you do. . .?	*Discovering* — Students learn to ask questions that will help them "personalize" learning. Provides speaker opportunities to expand what is said.

*Reading in the Content Areas, A Guide for Program Planning, Indiana Department of Education, Reading Effectiveness Program, 1980.

(Sample Form)

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT AS INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT

Date: _____

PERSONAL DATA

Name: _____ _____
Last First Middle Social Security No.

Present Address: _____
Street City State Zip County

Home Number: _____ Business Number: _____

SCHOOLS ATTENDED

High School: _____ Diploma _____ Year _____

Major Course of Study: _____ Minor Course of Study: _____

College: _____ Degree _____ Year _____
Name City No. of Years

Major Course of Study: _____ Minor Course of Study _____

Other Specified Training: _____ Completion Date: _____
Name City No. of Years

Major Course of Study: _____ Minor Course of Study: _____

PRESENT EMPLOYMENT DATA

Are you presently employed? _____ If so, may we inquire of present employer?

Name of Employer and Address: _____ Phone: _____

FORMER EMPLOYERS

Please list below your last four employers, starting with the most recent.

Date Month & Year	Name and Address of Employer	Position Held	Description
From:			
To:		Supervisor	
From:			
To:		Supervisor	
From:			

To: _____ Supervisor _____

From: _____

To: _____ Supervisor _____

Please answer: I want to be an instructional assistant because:

_____

_____

_____

_____

List experiences with young children:

_____

_____

_____

_____

List special skills:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Center for School Improvement and Performance
Office of School Assistance

Mailing Address:
Room 229, State House
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2798

Office Location:
Two Market Square Center
4th Floor
Indianapolis